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BOOK REVIEWS

The Frontier States. By Theodore Calvin Pease. The Illinois Centennial Commission, Springfield, 1918.

The "monumentum aere perennius" of the first centenary of Illinois statehood is to be a five-volume history of this great western commonwealth which, in a brief span of time, has out-distanced most of the original colonies. It is a new and happy departure in the way of celebrations, and while during the centennial year the usual speeches and pageantries were not overlooked, their value is transient in comparison with the permanent record of success through failure embodied in these volumes. For future generations they will prove a rich mine of valuable information. The first volume in the series, by Professor Buck, gave a general account of Illinois and its people at the time of their admission to statehood. The present volume carries the history forward from 1818 to 1848. During that formative period of thirty years Illinois was indeed the "frontier state." Pioneers passed over its territory in waves with varying manners, ideals and habits of life. The half-breed and the college-bred lawyer, the woman of the backwoods and the fine lady rubbed elbows in the little village where the frame house was rapidly replacing the log cabin. All were equally eager to possess their share of the vast stretches of diversified hill and plain, forest and prairie that lay so invitingly to hand. And all had to wage a continual political fight to obtain from their landlord, the Federal Government, the lowest possible terms for the acquisition of the coveted treasure; in 1820 Illinois land was sold at one dollar and twenty five cents per acre.

But it is the settlers themselves who interest us most. For they not only made the land what it is; they also fashioned and shaped the habits and hopes, the ideals and aspirations of the generations that followed; we of today are the heirs of their accumulated material and spiritual wealth. In the Illinois frontiersman there was none of the self-conscious, awkward rusticity of the European peasant. As one to the manner born and bred on the doctrines of liberty and equality, the conviction of his own dignity was apparent in the bearing and conversation

of every inhabitant. Money could not buy any obsequiousness on his part. But if he were appealed to as a man for help and sympathy, he usually responded in liberal measure. Intensely patriotic and inordinately fond of politics, where he found ample scope for the exercise of his most cherished rights and privileges, he believed with uncommon ardor in the destiny of the American nation as the world's standard-bearer of republican principles. Doubts and fears concerning the baneful influence of the foreigner on America's future were far removed from his mind; he could see no danger ahead as long as free and firm adherence to the fundamental tenets of democracy rapidly transmuted every new arrival into a staunch and true American. Such at least was the general attitude about 1820. Some years later a decided change set in.

If it is true that people are known by the papers they read and that publishers supply what the readers demand, then the general average of culture in early Illinois was fairly high and of a decidedly different stamp from that of today. Editors thought it their duty to keep from their readers anything that might be considered contrary to good manners and morals. On occasion they even rebuked as mere idle curiosity the desire for the details of murders and steamboat explosions; divorces were practically unknown. The paper's main function was to furnish a medium of polite communications from the editor to his patrons. Such foreign news as could be clipped from papers nearer the center of the great world; accounts of the proceedings of Congress and of the state general assembly; occasional speeches, political articles and forecasts, and oftentimes lengthy communications from readers on some theme of local or general interest, made up the bulk of the reading matter.

Public schools and free education were unknown. Such systematic instruction as the state afforded was supplied by private schools, and for a price. These private schools were connected with some religious denomination and pervaded by its teachings. Father Desmoulin had a school in Kaskaskia, where he taught Latin and French. Yet the frontiersman was quite often unreligious. Both from Catholic and from non-Catholic sources there is ample evidence to prove that there was a serious widespread disregard of religious observances. If deistic and

atheistic beliefs flourished even among the better classes, there was also a compensating advantage. "A man of good character," thus wrote an eyewitness, "is an acquisition; not that there is a small proportion of such men, but because the bad are as undisguisedly bad as their opposites are professedly good. This is not the land of hypocrisy. It would not here have its reward. Religion is not the road to worldly respectability, nor a possession of it the cloak of immorality."

The political institutions of early days were, of course, little different from those of the present time. However, the first Illinois Constitution grafted a unique and very curious body on the legislative department—the council of revision. It was composed of the governor and the justices of the Supreme Court. Its duty was to examine all laws passed by the house and senate, and to return such as it disapproved, which last could be passed over its veto by a majority of the members in each house. In practice the institution prevented useless legislation by calling to the attention of the legislators technical defects in laws passed. It also acted as a check on the extravagant expenditure of public money to no purpose. Thus in 1827 it protested that "vast sums from the public treasury have been thrown away on commissioners to view and mark out roads which have never been and never will be opened"!

The early criminal codes of Illinois serve as an index to an attitude of mind that was a stranger to maudlin sentimentality where evil-doers were concerned. By the criminal act of 1819 four offenses were punishable by death. From this list the code of 1827 subtracted assault and arson, unless a life were lost in the fire, while adding two corollary offenses. As to punishment by whipping, this same code, while applying it to nine offenses, including crimes of violence, forgery, counterfeiting, and altering marks and brands, cut down the number of lashes. In certain cases the code of 1819 prescribed 500 lashes, but the later code in no case exceeded 100. To the honor of Illinois be it said that in 1819 and 1827 acts were passed against dueling, the first of them limiting the death penalty to the principals, and the second making participatitn in a fatal duel murder.

Perhaps few commonwealths in the nascent republic paid so dearly for their indomitable progressive spirit as did Illinois.

Its early builders understood fully that easy and rapid means of communication with the world beyond their borders meant everything to the State. On all sides there was a clamor for the building of roads, railways and canals. But when it came to realize all these ambitious projects, and especially to providing the means, the State and its bondholders got quickly entangled in a mesh of financial difficulties and failures which it took years to unravel. Nothing daunted, the energetic pioneers set to work again, and deserved success attended their efforts in the end.

Interwoven in the web of these manifold activities were the struggles with the vanishing Indian aborigines, with the growing and threatening Mormon settlement in Nauvoo, and especially with the pro-slavery element. Certain ideals lay close to the heart of even the backwoodsman; they were never lost sight of, and the consciousness of their distant realization seemed only to intensify the zeal with which they were defended and to infuse new life into their protagonists after every failure. The oft-told story of Elijah Parish Lovejoy and his untimely end at Alton is but one instance among many.

Intimately bound up with the progress of Illinois are the rise and rapid growth of Chicago. During the period with which this volume deals, it was fast becoming the great emporium of the whole western country, although then even the most optimistic would not have dared to foretell its present size and importance. As a central and easily accessible point for imports and exports it had not and could not have a rival—its geographical situation was absolutely decisive. The rich farming belt surrounding it made it the supreme market for grain and all other produce, where profiteering, even in those early days, seems to have been practiced on a large scale. And when prices were artificially forced downward, "many would hold up their commodity a whole year, expecting a rise in the market. . . . I have known whole stacks of wheat and whole fields of corn to rot, or to be dribbled out and wasted to no purpose and whole droves of hogs to run wild in the woods so as never to be reclaimed whilst the owner was saving them for a higher price."

Although the great emancipator and savior of the union stood not as yet revealed in all his might, Illinois at this time

was beginning to feel the influence of his personality and the power of his word, as well as the nation at large. Especially was this the case during the Mexican war. Illinois had rallied enthusiastically to the call for soldiers, and, raw recruits as they were, they had markedly distinguished themselves, particularly at the battle of Buena Vista. Yet, Lincoln had consistently opposed the war from the first, and stigmatized it as one of "rapine and murder, robbery and dishonor." He felt that Illinois had sent her men to Mexico "to record their infamy and shame in the blood of poor, innocent, unoffending people, whose only crime was weakness." In a speech before the house, January 12, 1848, he declared that President Polk "is deeply conscious of being in the wrong; that he feels the blood of this war, like the blood of Abel, is crying to heaven against him; that originally having some strong motive . . . to involve the two countries in a war, and trusting to escape scrutiny by fixing the public gaze upon the exceeding brightness of military glory—that attractive rainbow that raises in showers of blood, that serpent's eye that charms to destroy—he plunged into it, and was swept on and on till, disappointed in his calculation of the ease with which Mexico might be subdued, he now finds himself he knows not where!" His uncompromising attitude was deeply resented by his opponents, but his patriotism was never questioned. However stirring the record of past events, especially when viewed in the light of present achievements, the Catholic historian always feels particular concern in the part his co-religionists took in them. Catholic history can be sympathetically understood and written only by Catholics, and Illinois has much to do in this regard. In a book like the present one does not expect and does not look for a detailed treatment of Catholic men and their contributions to the common fund of civilization. Yet justice demands that they be not passed over in absolute silence. In a review of the first volume of this series (*Cath. Hist. Review*, Vol. iv, No. 1), attention was called to this point, and the present work gives due credit to Catholics for their share in the development of a state which owes its very existence largely to Christian endeavor.

The French-Canadian Catholics, as the first white settlers, had prepared the way for the advance of the white race on Illi-

nois soil. Untoward circumstances had forced them to emigrate in large numbers across the Mississippi. Yet the school of Father Desmoulin, of which mention has already been made, was kept alive. Besides, in 1833 the convent of the Sisters of the Visitation was established in connection with the Menard Academy at Kaskaskia, and three years later it opened a commodious building to pupils. By 1842 eighteen Sisters had the care of seventy pupils, twelve of whom were orphans, taught free of charge. Tuition for the curriculum of literature, music and arithmetic was one hundred and twenty-five dollars a year, and twenty-five dollars for day students. In 1844 the school building was practically destroyed by the Mississippi flood, and this academy was moved to St. Louis. But Catholic day schools were maintained at Cahokia, La Salle and other places in the State.

With the advent, between 1830 and 1850, of a large number of Irish immigrants, nativism began its political machinations. Among the Whigs there was always a strong current of native American sentiment, which the Democrats, intent on securing the foreign vote, were not slow to bring it to the surface. In most instances where it appeared overtly in Illinois, this sentiment was expressed in the question as to whether newly arrived immigrants to the United States should be permitted to vote. At least one Illinois paper in 1838 openly denounced the practice of allowing the "Irish of the canal zone" who had been six months in Illinois, to vote, whether they had been naturalized or not. From the fact that even the naturalized Irish immigrants should be deprived of the vote, it was apparent that, besides patriotism, an unavowed motive was animating nativists in their campaign. At that time the Irish vote in Cook County was said to be one-half of the total. When the Whigs, who were emphatically Protestant, were accused, in connection with nativist attacks, of being anti-Catholic, the charge was more than a political maneuver. It was not so much "a certain aggressive loyalty to all things Irish" as to all things "Catholic" that "drew a sharp line of antagonism between the Irish and their Anglo-Saxon neighbors." And be it said in passing that "the canal zone Irish" laid the foundation of more than one now prosperous and populous Catholic settlement in the nascent cities and the surrounding farming territory.

Mention is also made of "The London Roman Catholic Emigration Society," which "hastened to complete preparations whereby various parties, each with its clergyman at its head, might find new homes in America." How many Catholics responded to this call, or what became of their Illinois settlements, does not appear. In 1850 there were 28,000 Irish in Illinois and 18,600 English settlers. With regard to the latter it is on record that "their minds were hampered with prejudices in favor of the customs and habits of the mother country, which, combined with the lack of those qualities that make good pioneers, kept the English from being classed with the successful settlers of the new country."

There were also a number of Catholics among the German immigrants to Illinois. Strangely enough, the vanguard and leaders of this Teutonic contingent became known as the "Latin farmers," for they knew more of Latin than of land. They brought to Illinois an element of culture and education that was in the long run to affect the life of the community. From the first they made no effort to isolate themselves from that life; though they furnished themselves with new and better homes, flowers and fruit trees, books and music, they at the same time adapted themselves to the simple, social standards of the people about them, and thereby gradually elevated the ideals of western life. Their influence was felt in farming, in commerce, in journalism, science, art and government; and in religion also, for the Catholic portion of them strove hard and successfully against many odds to build up with scanty means their churches and schools. They also became the butt of native-American antagonism.

During the period under consideration the largest number of Catholics in Illinois was drawn from those four countries: Canada, Ireland, Germany, England. The immigration from other countries, especially from Scandinavian lands, was overwhelmingly and uncompromisingly Protestant.

In his last chapter, "Social Advance," the author reviews in a comprehensive manner the progress made in Illinois by various sects and also by Catholicity. In 1826 there were, according to Bishop Rosati's report, 20 missions, mostly French, in southern Illinois. Their needs were supplied by missionaries sent out

from St. Louis. But beginning slowly in the thirties, and increasing rapidly in the forties, came that tide of Catholic immigrants, predominantly Irish and German, who, settling in great numbers in the northern section of the country, shifted ecclesiastical emphasis to the north and made Catholicism an important factor in state development. In 1833 these northern Catholics obtained their first resident pastor in the person of Father Irenaeus Mary St. Cyr. Chicago, where he resided, was incorporated the same year, the Catholics then numbering 130, or 90 per cent of the population. From that year dates the rapid growth of Catholicity in the city by the lake.

Professor Pease's thorough and impartial treatment of his theme deserves many imitators. While complying with scientific requirements in referring constantly to original sources, his work is by no means overburdened with notes and is in no wise pedantic. It is well calculated to satisfy both the ordinary reader and the more inquisitive historian.

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National Progress, 1907-1917. By Frederic Austin Ogg, Professor of Political Science, University of Wisconsin. New York and London: Harper & Brothers, 1918. Pp. xxii+419.

Professor Ogg's book is the 27th and concluding volume in the series published from original sources under the editorship of Albert Bushnell Hart, entitled *The American Nation, A History*. The purpose of the present volume is to afford the student of history an opportunity to view, in a single compact volume, the various events, issues, and tendencies which have made the decade from 1907, to the Declaration of War in 1917, one of the most interesting as well as one of the most eventful since the Civil War in the development of the United States as a nation. As the editor of the series points out in the Introduction, it is always a difficult task to write a critical and balanced narrative of recent events. For one thing a proper perspective is lacking and our judgment is apt to be influenced by personal factors. Some time must pass before one can profitably indulge in a calm analysis of events and appreciate their full significance and casual relationship. While a study of this kind therefore